

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 ORM-03 SR-02 IO-14 AID-20 ABF-01 OMB-01

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RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-03 SS-20 DRC-01 NEAE-00 /115 W

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FM AMEMBASSY JIDDA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6905

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L JIDDA 2302

E.O.: 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, XF, UN, SA

SUBJ: SAUDI CONTRIBUTIONS TO UNRWA

REF : A) JIDDA 1966; B) BEIRUT 4431

1. THE AMBASSADOR ASKED SAYYID OMAR SAQQAF, SAUDI MINISTER OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS, TODAY (APRIL 30) IF SAUDI ARABIA HAD YET DECIDED TO MAKE ADDITIONAL CONTRIBUTIONS TO UNRWA. THE MINISTER SAID HE HAD REAISED THE QUESTION WITH THE KING WHO REACTED STRONGLY AGAINST HELPING THOSE "RADICALS AND COMMUNISTS" ANY FURTHER, ALTHROUGH HE HAD FINALLY AGREED TO GIVE \$600,000.

2. THE AMBASSADOR SAID HE COULD NOT CONSIDER THIS ANY INCREASE AT ALL (LAST YEAR'S PAYMENT WAS \$150,000) AND ASKED THE MINISTER IF THIS MEANT THAT THE SAUDIS WOULD ALSO LIKE TO SEE THE UNITED STATES STOP ITS ASSISTANCE PROGRAM. THE MINISTER SAID NO, THIS WOULD CAUSE A STRONG ANTI-AMERICAN REACTION THROUGH THE AREA. THE UNITED STATES, HE THOUGHT, SHOULD CONTINUE ITS PAYMENTS.

3. THE AMBASSADOR ASKED WHAT REACTION THE MINISTER THOUGHT
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THERE WOULD BE IN THE UNITED STATES, PARTICULARLY IN THE

CONGRESS, WHEN IT BECAME KNOWN THAT SAUDI ARABIA IS AGAIN PAYING ONLY A NOMINAL SUM FOR PALESTINIAN RELIEF. THE AMBASSADOR REFERRED TO THE PROSITIVE EFFECT A LARGE SAUDI CONTRIBUTION TO UNRWA WOULD HAVE IN THE U.S. BUT, IN FACT, THE SUM WAS NOT LARGE, ONLY \$29 MILLION. THIS WOULD BE ONLY ABOUT TWELVE HOURS INCOME FROM OIL PRODUCTION, AND CONSIDERABLY LESS THAN SAUDI ARABIA'S CAPITAL ACCUMULATION IN A DAY.

4. THE MINISTER SAID HE WOULD TAKE THE MATTER UP AGAIN WITH THE KING.

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